

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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TAGS: PFOR, UR, US

SUBJ: SOVIET MEDIA ON U.S.- SOVIET RELATIONS

1. SUMMARY: SOVIET MEDIA HAVE PROMINENTLY REPORTED SECRETARY'S PRESS CONFERENCE ON SALT, ACKNOWLEDGING THAT SOVIETS TABLED PROPOSAL IN MARCH AND AT SAME TIME OUTLINING SECRETARY'S JUDGMENT THAT COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT UNLIKELY BY TIME OF SUMMIT. SENATE URGING OF SALT PROGRESS IS ALSO FAVORABLY REPORTED, BUT THERE IS NO ACKNOWLEDGEMENT IN EITHER OF FOREGOING THAT WATERGATE FACTOR BEING DISCUSSED IN I.S. HOWEVER, MOSCOW PUBLIC LECTURER DEVOTED LARGE PORTION OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS LECTURE TO DISCUSSION OF WATERGATE, CONTINUING TO EMPHASIZE PRESIDENT'S EFFORTS TO RESOLVE MATTER AND ASSURING LISTENERS THAT SUMMIT WOULD TAKE PLACE IN JUNE AS SCHEDULED. PRAVDA PUNDIT YURI ZHUKOV IN APRIL 14 TV DISCUSSION ACKNOWLEDGED OPPONENTS OF DETENTE IN U.S. BUT GAVE UPBEAT TREATMENT TO FORTHCOMING SUMMIT. END SUMMARY.

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2. TASS REPORT OF SECRETARY'S APRIL 12 PRESS CONFERENCE

IS CARRIED IN CENTRAL PRESS APRIL 14. IN RELATIVELY THOROUGH COVERAGE OF SECRETARY'S REMARKS ON SALT, IT NOTES HIS STATEMENT THAT SOVIETS TABLED SALT PROPOSAL DURING HIS MARCH VISIT TO MOSCOW AND THAT U.S. IS DEVELOPING COUNTER-PROPOSAL TO PRESENT IN NEAR FUTURE. IT REPORTS SECRETARY'S VIEW THAT COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT UNLIKELY BY TIME OF SUMMIT, BUT THAT SUBSTANTIAL AGREEMENT OF MORE LIMITED SCOPE MIGHT BE REACHED. IT DOES NOT MENTION MIRVS AS FOCUS OF CURRENT EFFORTS, WHICH IS CONSISTENT WITH SOVIET PRACTICE OF AVOIDING PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF DETAILS OF WEAPONRY ON SOVIET SIDE. ALTHOUGH IT PICKS UP SECRETARY'S COMMENT THAT SIGNIFICANT AGREEMENTS IN FIELDS OTHER THAN SALT CAN BE EXPECTED AT SUMMIT, IT FAILS TO MENTION HIS STATEMENT THAT U.S. HAS REVIEWED WHOLE FIELD OF ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS AND BELIEVES PROGRESS CAN BE MADE IN OTHER AREAS. IT REPORTS SECRETARY'S REFERENCE TO PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT AFTER PODGORNYY MEETING THAT PROGRESS BEING MADE IN SALT. FINALLY, IT STRESSES SECRETARY'S REMARKS ON IMPORTANCE OF SUMMIT, WHETHER OR NOT SALT AGREEMENT IS REACHED.

3. IZVESTIA APRIL 12 GIVES BRIEF BUT FAVORABLE ATTENTION TO SENATE LEADERS' LETTER TO SECRETARY AND FLOOR STATEMENTS BY SUPPORTERS OF RESOLUTION ON SALT. TREATMENT OF SENATE ACTIONS IS IN TASS ITEM DATED WASHINGTON, WHICH ADDS THAT U.S. PRESS HAD INTERPRETED THESE EFFORTS AS REBUFF TO FORCES IN CONGRESS TRYING TO BLOCK DETENTE IN U.S.- SOVIET RELATIONS. OTHER WEEKEND PRESS COVERAGE ROUTINELY REPORTS GROMYKO MEETING WITH PRESIDENT AND SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS WITH SECRETARY, NOTING THAT QUESTIONS RELATING TO FORTHCOMING MOSCOW VISIT WERE DISCUSSED.

4. AT ZNANIYE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS LECTURE APRIL 14, LECTURER DEVOTED 30 MINUTES OF HIS PRESENTATION TO DESCRIBING RAMIFICATIONS OF WATERGATE AFFAIR IN U.S. THOUGH HE DID NOT RECOUNT IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDING IN DETAIL, HE SAID SITUATION IS "VERY SERIOUS" FOR PRESIDENT. HE EMPHASIZED DEGREE TO WHICH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AFFAIR HAS GONE BEYOND LISTENING-DEVICE BEGINNINGS TO SUCH MATTERS AS COVER-UP, TRIALS OF PRESIDENT'S CLOSE AIDES, AND PRESIDENT'S TAX PROBLEMS. AS IN RECENT LENINGRAD LECTURE, SPEAKER CITED POLLS SHOWING DROP IN PRESIDENT'S POPULARITY. LECTURER DESCRIBED AFFAIR AS NOT JUST PERSONAL CRISIS FOR PRESIDENT BUT DEEP POLITICAL-GOVERNMENTAL CRISIS FOR U.S. HE TREATED PRESIDENT POSITIVELY, STRESSING HIS EFFORTS TO BRING

MATTERS TO RESOLUTION, CITING ILL-INTENTIONED COALITION OPPOSING HIM, AND NOTING THAT SUMMIT WILL TAKE PLACE IN JUNE, AS SCHEDULED.

5. PRAVDA COMMENTATOR YURIY ZHUKOV DEVOTED MOST OF HIS APRIL 14 TELEVISION QUESTION AND ANSWER PROGRAM TO U.S-SOVIET RELATIONS. ZHUKOV TOOK POSITIVE LINE ON SECRETARY'S MOSCOW VISIT AND PRESIDENT'S MEETING WITH PODGORNY IN PARIS. HE TOLD LISTENERS THAT NEW STEPS IN DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS WITH U.S. ARE CONTEMPLATED. ON NEGATIVE SIDE ZHUKOV SAID U.S. OPPONENTS OF DETENTE ARE ACTIVE. HOWEVER, CITING BREZHNEV, HE LEFT LISTENERS WITH CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT SUCH "ANTI-SOVIETS" ARE IN MINORITY AND SOVIETS ARE COMMITTED TO FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS. IN SAME VEIN HE TOOK U.S. PRESS TO TASK FOR REPORTS THAT SECRETARY'S MOSCOW TALKS HAD BEEN FAILURE. ZHUKOV QUOTED SECRETARY AS EXPRESSING SATISFACTION WITH RESULTS OF VISIT AND DEPLORED "DISINFORMATION OF BOURGEOIS PRESS."

6. ON U.S-SOVIET ECONOMIC RELATIONS ZHUKOV TOLD LISTENERS THAT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST USSR HAMPERS TRADE BUT THAT ABSENCE OF MFN DOES NOT BY ANY MEANS AFFECT ALL SOVIET EXPORTS TO U.S. CREDITS, ON OTHER HAND, ARE ESSENTIAL IF SUBSTANTIAL TRADE IS TO DEVELOP. REFERRING TO SIBERIAN OIL AND NATURAL GAS PROJECTS, HE WARNED THAT WITHOUT CREDITS SUCH VENTURES WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE AND NOTED THAT OTHER TRADING PARTNERS ARE AVAILABLE.
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